

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CU-02 DEAE-00

SNM-02 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-07 /106 W

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R 271000Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3549

INFO CINCPAC

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

DEA BANGKOK

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL MANDALAY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 RANGOON 1503

E.O. 11652: GDS

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1. SEPARATE TRIPS FOR PRESIDENT AND MADAM NEW WIN (CONF)

PRESIDENT NE WIN HAS SPENT THE PAST WEEK VISITING PAGAN, CHAUK, AND OTHER POINTS IN CENTRAL BURMA. IN A DEPARTURE FROM STANDARD PRACTICE, THE PRESIDENT WENT BY MOTORCADE RATHER THAN AIR TO HIS DESTINATION. ON MAY 23 MADAM NE WIN ACCOMPANIED BY NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE BUREAU CHIEF U LAY MAUNG DEPARTED FOR SINGAPORE ON THE FIRST LEG OF A TRIP TO SWITZERLAND AND PERHAPS OTHER POINTS IN EUROPE. THE SEPARATE TRAVELS HAVE FUELED RUMORS OF A RIFT BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND THE FIRST LADY WITH REPORTS OF A "SHOUTING MATCH" HAVING BEEN OVERHEARD IN THE PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE EARLIER THIS MONTH. HOWEVER, U LAY MAUNG WHO IS ACCOMPANYING MADAM NE WIN NORMALLY PRECEDES OR ACCOMPANIES THE PRESIDENT ON HIS TRIPS TO EUROPE WHICH ARE ALMOST AN ANNUAL JULY-AUGUST OCCURRENCE. HENCE, THIS TRIP IS PROBABLY A PRELUDE TO NE WIN'S OWN DEPARTURE FOR SWITZERLAND AT A SOMEWHAT LATER DATE.

2. USSR DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ARRIVES IN BURMA (UNC)

MR. N.P. FIRUBIN, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS ARRIVED IN RANGOON ON MAY 26. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS PERSONAL ASSISTANT, MR. A.M. DRYUKOV, AND TWO OFFICIALS FROM THE SOVIET MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR. V.K. BOLDYREV, DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE SOUTH ASIAN DIVISION AND MR. O.V. BOSTORIN, DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN DIVISION. THE GROUP WHICH ARRIVED FROM NAPAL WILL REMAIN IN BURMA UNTIL MAY 28. GUB DEPUTY FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER U WIN MET THE PARTY AT THE AIRPORT AND HOSTED A DINNER IN THEIR HONOR.

3. UNESCO DIRECTOR-GENERAL VISITS BURMA (UNC)

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UNESCO DIRECTOR-GENERAL AND MRS. AMADAU MAHTAR M'BOW VISITED BURMA MAY 22-25. THE ACCOMPANYING PARTY CONSISTED OF MR. V.G. PODOINITSIN, DIRECTOR, FIELD OFFICE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, NEW DELHI; MR. CHANG MIN KEE, CHIEF OF DIVISION OF COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS; MR. K. NHOUYVANISVONG, PROGRAM SPECIALIST; MR. M. MAKAGIANSAR, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL, CULTURE AND COMMUNICATIONS; AND MR. RAJA ROY SINGH, DIRECTOR, REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EDUCATION IN ASIA, BANGKOK. THE GROUP SPENT ONE DAY TOURING PAGAN AND THEN RETURNED TO RANGOON FOR TALKS WITH GUB OFFICIALS. MR. M'BOW MET SEPARATELY WITH GENERAL SAN YU, SECRETARY, COUNCIL OF STATE, PRIME MINISTER U MAUNG MAUNG KHA, INFORMATION MINISTER U KYI MAUNG, EDUCATION MINISTER DR. KHIN MAUNG WIN AND CULTURE MINISTER U AYE MAUNG. ACCORDING TO LOCAL UNDP OFFICIAL, RANGOON WAS A NECESSARY STOP-OVER FOR THE PARTY ENROUTE TO HANOI, AND AS THE GROUP HAD NO SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS TO DISCUSS WITH BURMESE OFFICIALS, ALL MEETINGS WERE MERE COURTESY CALLS.

4. STUDENT DEATH CAUSES ANXIOUS MOMENTS FOR GUB (UNC)

ON MAY 18, A UNIVERSITY STUDENT WAS FATALLY STABBED AND ANOTHER WAS GRAVELY WOUNDED BY PICKPOCKETS AT A BUS STOP IN RANGOON. THAT NIGHT, SOME TWO HUNDRED STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED IN FRONT OF RANGOON'S GENERAL HOSPITAL DEMANDING IMMEDIATE ACTION BY GUB. HOME MINISTER COL. SEIN LWIN REPORTEDLY CALLED IN ALL POLICE CHIEFS AND ORDERED THEM TO APPREHEND THE RUFFIANS OR RESIGN. WITHIN A FEW DAYS, THE ALLEGED MURDERER AND HIS COMPANIONS AS WELL AS OTHER GANGS OF PICKPOCKETS WERE ARRESTED. AT THE SAME TIME, ALL NEWSPAPERS HAVE CARRIED NEWS ITEMS, LETTERS AND EDITORIALS CALLING FOR AN END OF FLAGRANT PICKPOCKETING ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

COMMENT: (LOU) STUDENTS, WHO HAVE JUST RETURNED TO CLASSES FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR, REMAIN A PREOCCUPATION FOR THE AUTHORITIES WHO TOOK SWIFT ACTION IN ORDER TO DEFUSE POTENTIAL UNREST. ANXIOUS TO AVOID THE USE OF THE CORPSE AS A RALLYING POINT, THE GUB DECLARED RANGOON GENERAL HOSPITAL OFF-LIMITS AND THEN SPIRITED THE BODY BY RED CROSS VAN TO HIS HOME TOWN, MANDALAY, FOR BURIAL.
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5. JOURNALISTS AND SCHOLARS LEAVE ON STUDY TOURS (UNC)

FOUR BURMESE EDUCATORS LEFT FOR THE U.S. TO STUDY AMERICAN COMMUNITY COLLEGES FOR TWO MONTHS ON THE SAME DAY THAT SAO KAI HPA, EDITOR OF THE WORKING PEOPLE'S DAIL, RETURNED FROM A FOUR-MONTH STUDY TERM AT THE EAST-WEST CENTER. TWO OTHER EDITORS LEFT FOR AUSTRALIA TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INFORMATION SERVICES COURSE UNDER THE COLOMBO PLAN ALONG WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF THE STATE TEACHERS TRAINING COLLEGE, KANBE, AND A COMMAND ENGINEER OF THE CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION WHO WILL ALSO RECEIVE COLOMBO

6. BURMESE STEVEDORES PREPARE TO WORK IN KUWAIT (UNC)
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AN INDOCTRINATION AND TRAINING COURSE WAS GIVEN TO 253 BURMESE STEVEDORES, THE FIRST OF SOME 450, WHO ARE PREPARING TO WORK IN KUWAIT FOR ONE YEAR. (WEEK 18, ITEM 3). THE WORKERS, WHO WILL EARN FROM \$120 TO \$550 A MONTH, ARE RECEIVING THE SAME TYPE OF TRAINING WHICH DEPARTING SEAMEN RECEIVE, INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION OF PARTY PRINCIPLES AND A WARNING TO CONDUCT THEMSELVES CORRECTLY. EDITORIALS REITERATED THE NEED TO "UPHOLD THE DIGNITY OF THE STATE" BUT HAD SOME TROUBLE EXPLAINING HOW "LABOR IS A COMMODITY WHICH CANNOT BE BOUGHT" OR HOW A SOCIALIST SOCIETY IS "FREE FROM EXPLOITATION OF MAN BY MAN," EXCEPT THAT "WE ARE PROUD TO PITCH IN WITH THE NECESSARY HELP" (TO KUWAIT).

7. OPIUM PURCHASE COMMITTEE FORMED (UNC)

THE GUB CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL RECONSTITUTED THE OPIUM BUYING BODY WHICH WILL PURCHASE THIS YEAR'S OPIUM CROP FROM LEGAL CULTIVATORS. MEMBERS OF THE BODY ARE THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE PEOPLE'S POLICE FORCE, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF CUSTOMS, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRIES CORPORATION AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRIES CORPORATION.

8. PRC TECHNICIANS IN BURMA (UNC)

A FIVE-MEMBER PRC TECHNICAL MISSION LED BY MR. TAI YEN-LIANG ARRIVED IN BURMA ON MAY 9. THE MISSION WILL REMAIN IN THE COUNTRY FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD TO ASSIST IN CONSTRUCTION OF RICE MILLS IN BURMA'S DELTA AREA.

9. TWIN OTTER ARRIVES (UNC)

THE SECOND OF FOUR TWIN OTTER AIRCRAFT PURCHASED BY THE

GUB UNDER A CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY LOAN
ARRIVED IN RANGOON ON MAY 25. ON THE SAME DAY, 14 BURMA
AIRWAYS CORPORATION PILOTS DEPARTED FOR CANADA FOR TRAINING
IN TWIN OTTER HANDLING.

10. BURMA AND NETHERLANDS SIGN AIR PACT (UNC)
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THE GUB SIGNED A NEW AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT WITH THE
NETHERLANDS ON MAY 24. WHICH REPLACES A PACT SIGNED IN 1953.

COMMENT: NO INCREASE IN AIR TRAFFIC BETWEEN HOLLAND AND
BURMA IS LIKELY IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THE URGENCY OF THIS MATTER
IS UNDERSCORED BY THE FACT THAT NEGOTIATIONS WERE COMPLETED
IN JUNE OF 1973, BUT THE AGREEMENT WAS NOT SIGNED UNTIL ALMOST
FOUR YEARS LATER.

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